

MINUTES OF THE STARK COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION
May 18, 2026

The Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation met for their regular meeting on Monday, May 18, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in the Stark County Regional Planning Commission Conference Room.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY SCLRC CHAIRMAN, John Arnold
2. ROLL CALL – Board Members Present

Roll call found the following board members in attendance: John Arnold, Alex Zumbar, Bill Smith, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2026 MEETING

Zumbar moved and Zahirsky seconded to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2026 meeting. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Alex Zumbar, Bill Smith, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

5. PUBLIC SPEAKS - none

6. TREASURER/FISCAL REPORT

Heather Cunningham presented an updated financial report for the month of March which reflects the budget transfer that was approved at the February meeting for \$117.50. The financial report that was included in the packet at last month's meeting did not show that transfer. Harold moved and Arnold seconded to approve the amended report for March as presented. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Bill Smith, Alex Zumbar, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

Cunningham reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the month of April. Harold moved and Zumbar seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report for April as presented. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Bill Smith, Alex Zumbar, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

Cunningham presented a budget revision request to move \$104,808.88 from the Property Acquisition and Rehab expense line item to the Demolition Program expense line item. The move is to cover the requests that are going to be presented later in the meeting for Lexington Township and Furbay Electric. Harold moved and Zumbar seconded to approve the request as presented. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Bill Smith, Alex Zumbar, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

The previous budget revision request brought the Demolition Assistance Program balance back down to zero. Moving forward, the board will need to make a decision about how to handle this program for the remainder of the year.

One option is to leave the budget at zero and defer any applications received through the end of the year to the 2027 budget, with the exception of emergencies that the board deems appropriate to fund.

Alternatively, as discussed in February, the board could appropriate approximately \$100,000 and commit to operating within that amount for the remainder of the year — again, with exceptions for board-approved emergencies. Once those funds are exhausted, remaining applications would be deferred to 2027. These options were discussed and the decision was made to continue to bring applications before the board for consideration as they are received and to present a budget revision request at that time.

The third request was to do a \$77,000 appropriation from cash for the Prosecutor's office contracted expenses due to their increased caseload from applications received from TAAP, Side Lot, and Vacant Lot programs. Harold moved and Zumbar seconded to approve an increased appropriation of \$100,000 for the Prosecutor's contract. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Bill Smith, Alex Zumbar, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

6. SIDE LOT/VACANT LOT PROGRAM REPORT

Sarah Peters provided the Side Lot Program Update.

Arnold moved and Smith seconded to approve the Side Lot/Vacant Lot Report as submitted. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Bill Smith, Alex Zumbar, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

7. Update from Habitat for Humanity

Beth Lechner, Chief Executive Officer, gave an update from Habitat for Humanity East Central Ohio. Habitat for Humanity East Central Ohio operates across five counties and has built and preserved nearly 700 homes over nearly 40 years. The organization ranks 24th in production among 1,200 Habitat affiliates nationwide. This summer, the organization will complete its 700th home.

Habitat sells homes, it does not give them away. Families are required to have a two-year consistent work history, maintain a controlled debt-to-income ratio, and contribute a \$1,000 down payment. Mortgages are set at 0% interest and calculated at 25% of the family's income, with taxes, insurance, and closing costs included. Families also complete a Sweat Equity program involving hundreds of hours of financial education, home maintenance training, and construction participation.

Their board recently voted to expand income eligibility from 30–80% of Area Median Income (AMI) to 30–100% AMI, reflecting the growing gap between wages and housing costs and the difficulty many working families now face in qualifying for conventional mortgages.

The cost to build a Habitat home has risen from \$85,000 in 2019 to approximately \$109,000 currently, after peaking at \$145,000 during COVID. The organization's target is \$100,000 per home, being pursued through increased product donations and local and national partnerships.

Forty-four percent of Habitat's new builds utilize Land Bank property. Since the last report in 2024, Habitat has acquired 223 parcels and completed 60 projects, including 50 new construction homes, 4 home preservations, 3 demolitions, and 3 park installations. The organization has invested over \$7.4 million in those properties, generating approximately \$73,000 in annual tax revenue.

Obtaining vacant properties for rehabilitation remains difficult, as properties are often purchased by outside investors at sheriff's sale before Habitat can acquire them, or deteriorate to the point of requiring demolition. Acquiring more of these properties through the Land Bank would allow Habitat to convert them to owner-occupied homes rather than rentals.

Demand continues to grow for aging-in-place repairs, which are provided free to eligible fixed-income homeowners. Funding for this program is more difficult to secure than for new construction.

Rehabilitation projects are difficult to fund because, while volunteers help, the work still requires a significant number of subcontractors and is not always volunteer-friendly. Acquiring properties through the Land Bank is extremely helpful, especially as property prices have increased dramatically over the years. There are challenges in determining whether some properties should be rehabilitated or demolished, and homes considered possible demolitions are sometimes quickly purchased and occupied by tenants. With more flexibility and support in property acquisition, Habitat could complete many more rehabilitation projects.

Arnold praised Habitat for successfully implementing a national program at the local level and highlighted the positive impact of its work. He also expressed pride in the partnership with Habitat, noting that it is one of the first examples he mentions when explaining the Land Bank's work to others.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Targeted Acquisitions Assistance Requests:

- City of Canton – 35 parcels

Peters presented 35 TAAP applications submitted by the city of Canton. All 35 parcels are certified tax delinquent vacant land.

Harold moved and Zumbar seconded to approve the TAAP requests. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Alex Zumbar, Bill Smith, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

- Habitat for Humanity – 28 parcels

Peters presented 28 TAAP applications submitted by Habitat for Humanity East Central Ohio. Twenty-six parcels are in the city of Canton with all being certified tax delinquent vacant land. Two parcels are located in the city of Massillon and are certified tax delinquent vacant land.

Zumbar moved and Arnold seconded to approve the TAAP requests. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Alex Zumbar, Bill Smith, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

b. Demolition Assistance Requests

- Lexington Township – Parcel # 2800971

Peters stated the DAP request is for a fire damaged structure on Greenbower Street NE. The property was vacant and abandoned already in a deteriorated condition. There was no insurance available from the property owner. The township did nuisance abatement proceedings and are requesting \$4,956.88 in assistance to demolish this property.

Arnold moved and Zumbar seconded to approve the DAP request. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Alex Zumbar, Bill Smith, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

- Furbay Electric – Parcel #s 203555 & 211730

Peters presented a DAP application from Furbay Electric for 115 Shcroyer Avenue SW and 119 Shcroyer Avenue SW. The property is adjacent to their currently operating business and buildings. These

buildings are vacant and Furbay's intent is to demolish them for redevelopment. They've got a total estimated project cost of just over \$199,700 and are requesting funding reimbursement of \$99,852.

Zahirsky stated that Furbay is experiencing significant growth and increased statewide activity, but has outgrown its current facility. As a result, the city is assisting with plans to demolish nearby buildings and improve safety along Schroyer Avenue, including possible raised crosswalks and lighting improvements due to heavy truck and tow motor traffic in the area. Board members emphasized that the broader goal is to help Furbay remain and expand in Canton rather than relocate elsewhere.

Mr. Tim Furbay stated that demolition work is tentatively planned for late May or June, pending coordination with AEP to remove electrical infrastructure. The company is also working with an architect to design expanded warehouse and office space, including renovations to existing offices and additional warehouse construction on the west side of Shroyer Avenue. He noted that Furbay has been in business since 1934 - 92 years of operation.

Harold moved and Zumbar seconded to approve the DAP request. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye – John Arnold, Alex Zumbar, Bill Smith, Peter Zahirsky and Alan Harold.

9. OLD BUSINESS

10. NEXT MEETING – June 15, 2026 - 9:00 a.m.

11. ADJOURNED